

16 February 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Howard Stoertz

SUBJECT:  Draft

25X1

I find this draft troublesome. Although it points out the shortcomings of the B Team's way of doing things, it winds up appearing to support the B Team and its charges most of the way down the line. In particular:

" . . . we find the B Team report to be a disturbing portrayal of the intelligence record, one that calls for careful review and corrective action by all members of the Intelligence Community.

"Our review of Soviet military estimates since 1960 and knowledge of the Community's analytical output in the more recent years support much of the B Team criticism . . . the central theme of their protest against the Intelligence Community is close to the mark: intelligence does not put enough effort into analysis of the pertinent available data to try to understand the Russian mentality and the motivations that lie behind Soviet military policy."

The draft goes on to note that after deemphasizing the "soft data" on Soviet intentions in the 1960s, both CIA and DIA reorganized their assets in the early 1970s so as to focus more on military issues demanding more attention but were making only slow progress because both their data bases and skilled manpower had atrophied.

It then returns to the main theme:

"But the more telling aspect of the B Team critique is their view that Community estimates of Soviet military policy [and] were not very useful because they failed to analyze the available data. There are few Community experts on Soviet affairs and they can rarely find time to dig deep and reflect on the relevant documents on Soviet military affairs. . . This is not to say that the B Team analysis of Soviet objectives is correct; it is to say that the necessary incisive analysis of the rather sizeable quantities of information on Soviet policy have not been carried out."

Stated as it is in the last quote above, this is a legitimate point for the IC staff to raise and make recommendations about. In its comments, however, the draft fails to take much account of the efforts which have been made to improve the Intelligence Community's work in this area.

In addition the draft contains many other comments which give unqualified support to B Team charges and in particular fail to distinguish between those criticisms which apply to the more remote past and those which might be pertinent today:

"... the charge of mirror-imaging is sustained in our review of past estimates. Again, the US fallback on mirror-imaging, where applicable, to describe Soviet motives can be blamed on deficient analysis of soft data that can often provide a more realistic appreciation of Soviet motivations and objectives." But the examples provided in the draft apply principally to the 1960s--misjudgment of goals for Soviet rocket forces in the mid-1960s, civil defense, probable economic constraints on the strategic buildup.

"While it is true that the NIEs over the past several years contained a number of statements that incorrectly minimized the Soviet strategic buildup, the answer can be as much a result of short-sighted concern on the part of the estimators as a reflection of policy concern. For example, the minimalization of the eventual Soviet missile buildup during the latter half of the 1960s was based on a variety of well-assessed factors. . . ."

"The B Team is more lenient with its criticism of the estimates during the 1970s and finds no suggestion of bias. Presumably, if the judgments are correct in the eyes of the B Team, the methodology is faultless. Our review of the estimates showed no clear change in analytical and estimating methods during this period. . . ."

[This ignores implications of bias on SALT and ASW and the changes in force projection and analysis of potential implications of different possible Soviet force structures introduced in the 1970s.]

We should probably seek to get the IC staff to redraft, concentrating on the issue of the extent to which the B Team's comments apply today and on the question of ~~what~~ should the Intelligence Community do.